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The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

The situation in the Middle East

Strengthening of the United Nations system

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

International drug control

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 21 November 2003 from the Permanent Representatives of India and the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit the Declaration of the Russian Federation and the Republic of India on Global Challenges and Threats to International Security and Stability, which was adopted during the visit of the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, to the Russian Federation on 12 November 2003 (see annex).

We would be grateful if the present letter and its annex were distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under items 28, 37, 59, 60, 109 and 156 of the agenda of its fifty-eighth session and as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vijay K. **Nambiar**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Sergey **Lavrov**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 21 November 2003 from the Permanent Representatives of India and the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English/Russian]

Declaration of the Russian Federation and the Republic of India on Global Challenges and Threats to International Security and Stability, the Kremlin, Moscow, November 12, 2003

The Russian Federation and the Republic of India,

GUIDED by the lofty aims and principles of the Charter of the United Nations Organization,

BASED on the provisions of the United Nations Millennium Declaration of September 8, 2000 on the collective responsibility of states for the removal of threats to international peace and security and for the affirmation of the principles of human dignity, equality and justice on the global level,

REFERRING to UN General Assembly Resolution 57/145 ("Responding to global threats and challenges") of December 16, 2002,

RECOGNIZING globalization and the interdependence of the world as a natural process of the evolution of mankind giving rise to both new opportunities and new threats,

TAKING into account the fact that the uneven distribution of the benefits and costs of globalization gives rise to a growing inequality among the countries of the world,

EXPRESSING RESOLVE to cooperate in countering the global challenges and threats brought on by international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, trans-national organized crime, illicit drug trafficking, money laundering, the degradation of the environment and the inequality in development,

PROCEEDING from an urgent need to consolidate the efforts of the international community under the aegis of the UN to remove these global challenges and threats,

CONSCIOUS of their common values and responsibility as multinational democratic states,

STRIVING to continue to cooperate closely in ensuring universal peace and progress,

REAFFIRMING their commitments under the Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation Between the Russian Federation and the Republic of India of January 28, 1993, Moscow Declaration on the Protection of the Interests of Multinational States of June 30, 1994, the Declaration on Strategic Partnership Between the Russian Federation and the Republic of India of October 5, 2000, the Delhi Declaration on Further Consolidation of Strategic Partnership between the Russian Federation and the Republic of India of December 4, 2002, the Moscow Declaration of the Russian Federation and the Republic of India on International Terrorism of November 6, 2001, and the Memorandum of Understanding Between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of India on Cooperation in the Fight Against Terrorism of December 4, 2002,

HEREBY DECLARE:

The Russian Federation and India recognize that to advance universal peace, security and stability a dialogue, consultations and cooperation of concerned countries are needed. As strategic partners, the Russian Federation and India reaffirm their commitment to cooperation at the bilateral and multilateral levels on strategic issues for the purpose of shaping a universal and effective system of counteraction against the global challenges and threats of the 21st century, with the UN playing the leading role.

The Russian Federation and India as major and influential democracies of the world are called upon to play a weighty role here. Both states are unswervingly working to maximally bring democratic principles into international affairs. The Russian Federation and India are certain that the creation of a future international order based on multipolarity should be determined by collective and multilateral, not unilateral processes. Both countries are for building a unified, equitable and democratic world pattern and a comprehensive system of collective security based on the supremacy of law and international norms and on mutual trust, reciprocal benefit, equality and cooperation.

The Russian Federation and India stress the key role of the United Nations in solving major international problems. The United Nations can and should be adapted to existing realities so as to preserve and enhance its efficiency and effectiveness. The Russian Federation and India presume that UN reform should envisage the earliest possible enlargement of the UN Security Council. The prevention and peaceful settlement of conflicts in accordance with the UN Charter and international law should remain one of the major lines of activity of the United Nations.

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The Russian Federation and India are convinced that greater interaction and mutual respect between various societies and cultures will contribute both to the enrichment of these cultures and to the strengthening of harmony and security in the world. In the era of globalization that has set in a genuine multipolarity - in its political and economic, as well as social and cultural manifestation - can be ensured only by way of the preservation of diversity. The Russian Federation and India also resolutely declare that in today's diverse and manifold world community there is no room for any extremist ideology or intolerance. They will make every effort to counter all the forms of extremism, including religious extremism, which has engendered a breeding ground of terrorism in their common neighborhood.

The Russian Federation and India are united in the struggle against the evil of international terrorism. They are actively cooperating between themselves and with other countries on the antiterrorist front. Both countries resolutely declare that international terrorists, under whatever slogans they may act, never will manage to bring the world to its knees.

The Russian Federation and India regard the following as urgent and major steps to avert effectively and everywhere the threat of international terrorism:

- the creation in the world of an atmosphere of total nonacceptance of terrorism and the absolute rejection of all of its forms;

- a consistent and uncompromising approach to terrorism, the eradication of the practice of "double standards";

- the prevention of financing for terrorist activities;

- the effective implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1373 against those who provide support to terrorists, including financial, connive at them or grant them shelter for the commission of acts of cross-border terrorism;

- the strengthening of confidence among the members of the antiterrorist coalition, including by due consideration for the interests of each other and by conducting the fight against terrorism strictly on the basis of the rules of international law and the principles of the UN Charter;

- perfecting the national and international legal base of counteraction against terrorism, ensuring a truly universal character of existing antiterrorist conventions, and completing as soon as possible the elaboration of the draft treaties at the UN, including the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, submitted by India, and the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, submitted by the Russian Federation;

- developing cooperation to deprive terrorists of access to weapons of mass destruction, their delivery means and materials and technologies for their production;

- perfecting the mechanisms for legal assistance and extradition with the aim of ensuring the inevitability of punishment for terrorist crimes;

- the provision of favorable conditions for the coexistence of various religions, cultures and civilizations with emphasis on greater understanding and respect between them, especially on the thought that terrorism cannot be identified with any particular religion or ethnic group.

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The Russian Federation and India are concerned at the illicit trade in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors assuming ever more menacing proportions. Drastic and effective measures are necessary on the part of the international community to counter this threat, especially because the drug business serves as a financial base of international terrorism. Both countries are taking specific practical steps to fight the illicit trade in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors, primarily in their common neighborhood.

The Russian Federation and India presume that the task of strengthening multilateral cooperation in the combating of the global threat of drugs is extremely urgent today. The Russian Federation and India underscore the intensive need to develop under the aegis of the UN a comprehensive strategy for an effective solution of this problem and reaffirm their strong disposition to cooperate closely with the United Nations and other international organizations under the UN Drug Control Program.

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The Russian Federation and India support the work of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan on national reconstruction and express their solidarity with all the efforts of the international community to assist peace, stability, national reconciliation and an economic revival of Afghanistan. Of great importance is the implementation of the provisions of the Bonn Agreements on the timeframe for next year's democratic elections. The Russian Federation and India firmly believe that Afghanistan should become a peaceful, strong, prosperous, integral and independent state, free from external interference and living in peace and harmony with its neighbors.

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The Russian Federation and India are convinced that a specific time plan of action should be adopted under the aegis of the UN for the speediest restoration of the state sovereignty of Iraq, the stabilization of the political and humanitarian situation in the country and the ensuring of its economic growth with broad international participation.

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The Russian Federation and India call for not allowing the implementation of the Road Map for settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to be scuttled. Failure to implement the Road Map may result in that the situation both in Israel and Palestine and in the Middle East as a whole will get out of control. This may threaten grave consequences not only for the region, but also for the entire world.

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The Russian Federation and India support the efforts of concerned countries and the international community, directed towards a peaceful solution of the nuclear problem on the Korean Peninsula and the ensuring of its denuclearized status, including the continuation of six-way talks in Beijing and the finding of mutually acceptable solution, as well as for the further development of inter-Korean dialogue and cooperation.

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The Russian Federation and India are convinced that the success of the fight against present-day global challenges and threats largely depends on a proper solution of social and economic problems, such as the eradication of poverty, mass unemployment, illiteracy and discrimination on racial, ethnic and religious grounds. Both countries proceed from the necessity to assist an even and sustainable development of the world economy to attain prosperity for all states. One way to this is seen by them in providing access for the majority of humanity to high technologies, the driving force of globalization. The wider will be access to the achievements and benefits of scientific and technological progress, the higher will be the prosperity of a greater number of people, the smaller will be the gap between the developed and developing parts of the world, the more it will be possible to neutralize the causes for conflicts.

The Russian Federation and India, important partners in the field of science and technology, possess a strong potential for the joint elaboration of alternative technologies. They are convinced that the multipolarity of the high technology world could help enormously to strengthen the political and economic multipolarity of the modern world.

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The Russian Federation and India declare that, based on their long-standing relations as reliable, predictable and responsible strategic partners, they are committed to the quest for effective and long-term solutions and proper answers to the above-mentioned challenges and threats to mankind, relying in their efforts upon the UN Charter and the principles of international law.